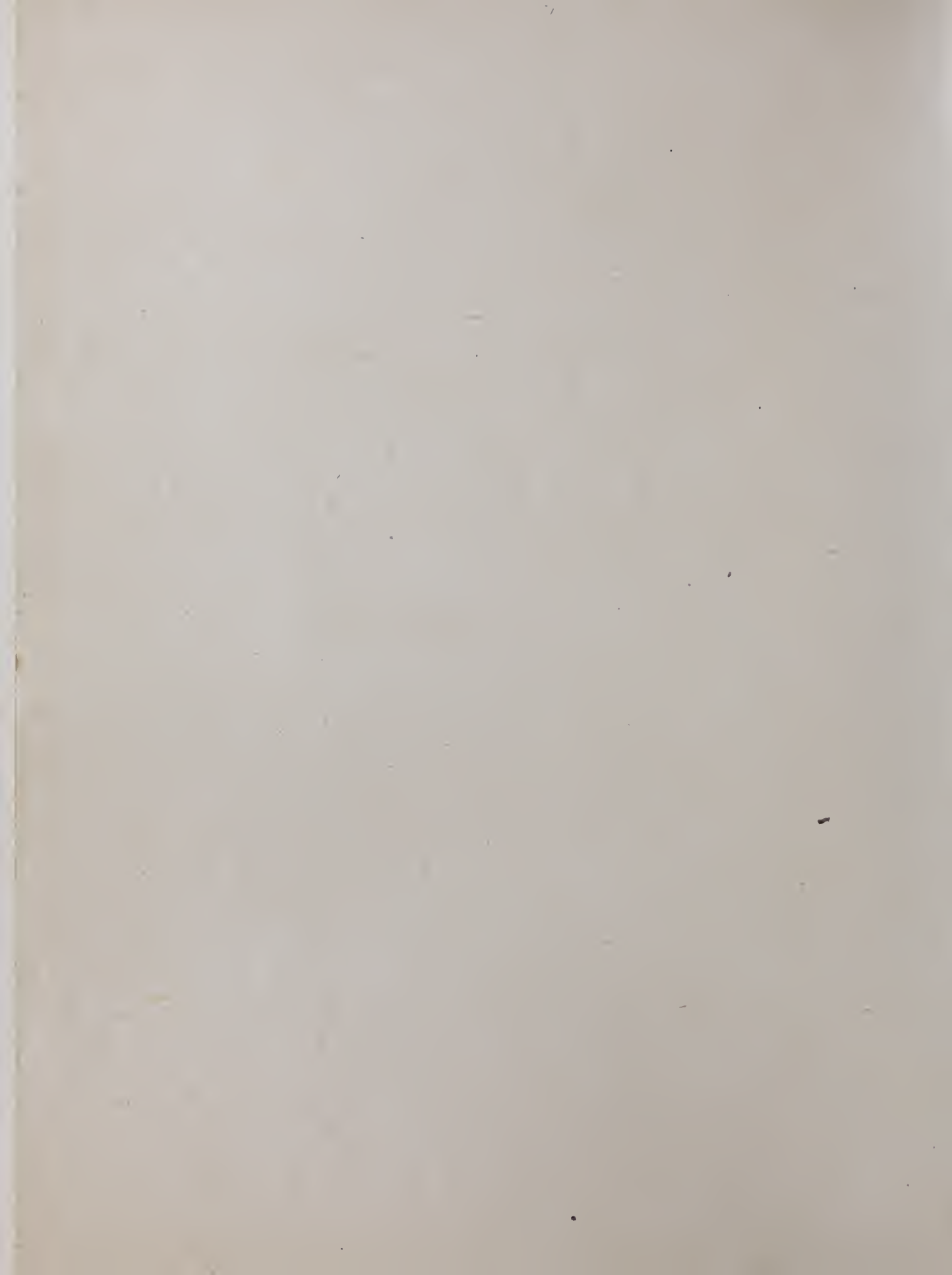


History of Railroads to Gloucester.



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HISTORY OF RAILROAD TO GLOUCESTER.

The first land communication between Gloucester and Boston was established April 25, 1788, by John Lowe a tavern keeper on Front Street. (Now Main)

Trips were run twice a week in an open two horse carraige. Four horse coaches soon took the place of the old vehicle. Later in 1805 daily trips were run so people could go to, and return from Boston in one day.

At this time only four other stage lines were run to Boston, one from Salem, one from Portsmouth, one from Providence and one from New York.

A meeting of the citizens was held on Sept. 14, 1844 at Stacy's Hall. Wm. Ferson, Esqr., was chosen Chairman. John J. Dobson, Secretary. On motion of B. K. Hough it was unaminously resolved that it would be for the interest of this town to have a railroad to connect with the Eastern RR. at Beverly.

A Committee for the survey of the route was chosen as follows:-B. K. Hough, Elias Davis, F. G. Lowe, J. B. Winchester George H. Rogers.

Soon after this work was commenced, but it was not

completed until 1847. Here is an item which appeared in the Telegraph, an old Gloucester paper published twice a week.

October 6, 1847. Gloucester Branch Railroad.


" We are told that an engine was seen near the head of Little River at West Parish, on Monday last. There is some hopes that the road will be completed this fall. "

Cars began running regular trips Nov., 2, 1847, having on the day previous carried a party of citizens, by invitation of the company on a pleasure excursion to Salem. Two trains a day were run in each direction, leaving here at 7:30 or as it was then called 7 1/2 A.M. and 3 1/2 P.M. The fare to Salem was fifty cents and to Boston ninety cents. It is said that upwards of a hundred and fifty passengers were on the first train and about fifty in the afternoon.

Telegraph item No.2. Nov. 3, 1847.

" Now the cars are running a complete revolution will be made in the way of travelling to and from this place. Our citizens will not be obliged to travel in the slow and cumbersome stage coaches, which have of late, in many cases, been little better than baggage wagons; but are enabled to go in a more expeditious and comfortable manner in the cars".

Mr. Jacob Winchester, or "Jake" as he was familiarly called, a former stage driver, was the first conductor on



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this line. Later, Mr. Cambden C. Davis, who lived on Mason Street, in the house occupied by the late Dr. Smith, next to that of Mr. Charles Tamen, was also conductor.

When the road was first planned the depot was to be back of where the Unitarian Church now stands. The plan was afterward changed, and the station was built where the new Swift Building now stands, about opposite Mr. W. Frank Parsons house.

The stone engine house, with a wind-mill on top stood back of the depot. Until 1870, but one engine was put up here, after that, a second was also put up.

The station was moved several times, first beside the engine house, then to two other places, probably between there and the present location.

From Telegraph of November 6, 1847.

" Persons visiting the Depot at the time of arrival of the cars, should bear in mind that, there is scarcely room in the building for the accomodation of the train and those who come on it, and that those who have no urgent business there, by crowding into the building, prevented the passengers from leaving with such despatch as they might wish."

Freight was carried on passenger trains up to 1857, one car being used for that purpose. When a lot of cars were here they were hauled back empty. A third train each way was put on in 1855.

